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FOR THE AMBASSADOR

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If the French agree to para. 7 DEPTEL 4756 then you may give them orally the following views on procedures and a new government. Our views are based on consultations with General Collins, a careful study of the French aide-memoire of April 17, 1955, Bao Dai's proposals, and the views of various Vietnamese in Saigon.

A. Our tentative proposals on procedures are as follows:

1) The US will have to maintain position of full support for Diem until and unless Vietnamese leaders develop alternate proposal which Bao Dai would support.

2) Bao Dai should be informed by both governments that before we would consider support for any change he must guarantee that he will confirm Prime Minister's authority over police officials, the Binh Xuyen will be removed from police functions, and surete, and that the sects will agree to a broad program of their integration into the national life of Vietnam on the basis of QTE a single nation, a single state, a single army, and a single administration UNQTE. Such decree by Bao Dai must be in process before Diem

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Clearances: S - The Secretary (in substance)
G - Mr. Murphy
C - Mr. MacArthur
FE:PSA-General Collins
WE - Mr. Tyler
FE - Mr. Sebald
S/P - Mr. Bowie

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leaves and new Prime Minister installed, to prevent clear Binh Xuyen QTE victory UNQTE over Diem which would rise to plague successor.

3) If Bao Dai gives adequate assurances, Collins and Ely should immediately help the Vietnamese work out the new alignment, urge Diem to serve in a new capacity, if he will, and provide full support for the new government. If Diem refuses, the program should nevertheless be carried out anyway.

4) While the Vietnamese in Saigon should appear to be the framers of a new government, Collins and Ely will probably have to be in practice the catalysts. This may result in stories regarding a new Collins-Ely QTE formula UNQTE but we should make every attempt to keep the Vietnamese label.

5) General Collins and Ely should inform Diem that as a result of his inability to create a broadly based coalition government, and because of Vietnamese resistance to him, their governments are no longer in positions to attempt to prevent his removal from office. Diem's patriotic qualities are of great potential value to Vietnam and it is hoped he will lend his services to any new government which might be appointed.

6) Collins and Ely together speaking for their governments may be able to elicit ~~this~~ formula outlined sub-para 4 above from Vietnamese political leaders behind the scenes. If those leaders, including Diem if practicable, adopt such a formula, they could ask Bao Dai to countersign it. If the Vietnamese consulted cannot agree among themselves on a candidate, then Ely and Collins will have to recommend a name for Bao Dai to designate to form a new government under the proper terms and conditions.

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B. Our tentative proposals on a new government are as follows:

1) Cabinet: The executive authority of full powers with Do or Quat as president and vice president, respectively, composed of small nucleus of most able nationalist leaders. It would be highly desirable if the cabinet itself could include some from Diem's cabinet and some new faces. It would operate as an interim coalition government until a fully elected National Assembly is constituted. The immediate tasks of the new cabinet would be (a) resolution of sect problem, (b) completion of reform of the armed forces and police, (c) satisfactory resettlement of present and future refugees, (d) energetic political program in provinces, (e) more active international policy in Southeast Asia, and (f) consultation with the Viet Minh on Geneva elections in 1956 and preparations for elections and a constituent assembly in Free Viet-Nam at some ~~xxx~~ time.

2) Consultative Council: An advisory body of 25-35 leading personalities and group representatives, including the sects. Diem should be persuaded if possible to accept the chairmanship of this council. Its principal function would be to generate spirit of unity and cooperation among the people and groups throughout Free Vietnam. At the request of the president or the cabinet, it would advise the president and cabinet on major matters of state. It should have no executive or administrative functions. It should continue until the constitution of a permanent structure of government by a constituent assembly.

3) Provisional National Assembly: This quasi-legislative body of elected and appointed candidates already envisaged and scheduled to be set up

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should be formed and convoked as soon as possible once a new cabinet is in office. It would review the budget and designate a special committee to draft plans for a constituent assembly.

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